

From: JGKnox@aol.com@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 7:33pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement.

January 16, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft
US Department of Justice, 950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Ashcroft:

I am concerned not only that the Microsoft antitrust case has dragged out for so long, but also that the settlement which is now pending threatens to be overturned if the correct course of action is not pursued. Nine states with a vested interest in the Microsoft case are currently seeking to overturn the settlement and to seek to reopen the antitrust suit against Microsoft. This has gone on long enough. I do not believe it is necessary to waste the time and resources of the Department of Justice, Microsoft, and the plaintiff states any longer. I urge you and your office to carefully consider the implications of extended litigation before any decisions are made.

First of all, additional litigation is unnecessary. Microsoft, while it may have been in violation of antitrust laws at the beginning of the suit, has agreed to terms in the settlement that would prevent them from further antitrust violations. For example, upcoming versions of Windows will now be formatted in order to support non-Microsoft programs and products, and various line code, interfaces, and protocols will be disclosed to Microsoft competitors so that they will be able to create workable interfaces between their programs and the Windows operating system. Microsoft has also agreed to license applicable intellectual property rights to all third parties working under the terms of the settlement.

Secondly, further litigation is unwise. I do not believe it is in the best interests of the economy, the consumer, or the American IT industry to continue to drag out the suit any longer. It is a waste of time and money and it will lead to no good. The settlement reached is just to all parties involved and needs no further modification. Microsoft and state and federal resources have been tied up for too long in this suit. The American economy, as well as the American IT industry, have been hurt by this stagnation. This is unconscionable. The Department of Justice in antitrust cases is supposed to work in the public interest. As far as I can determine, the public has only been hurt by the lack of swift conclusion. I urge you and your office to take a stand and allow the settlement to pass without further delay. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Knox
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cc: Senator Rick Santorum

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